Thalassemia patients

†647. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the number of thalassemia patients is on rise in our country;

(b) if so, the arrangements made for prevention of the disease in the hospitals;

(c) whether it is also a fact that sufficient medical resources are not available for treatment of thalassemia patients in the capital city of Delhi; and

(d) if so, the efforts being made by Government in order to make sufficient medical resources available?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) As reported by Indian Council of Medical Research, there is no Central or State-wise registry to know the exact prevalence of the disease. However based on the data generated by various studies it is estimated that every year about 10000 children are born with the disease in the country.

(b) Prevention of the disease is possible by genetic counseling and prenatal diagnosis, facilities for which are available at very limited centers in the country as the procedure is sophisticated.

(c) and (d) There is no national Programme for Thalassemia. The patients are treated in the normal Health Care Delivery System at all levels.

National Polio Programme

648. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are planning to launch nation-wide drives of National Polio Programme, focusing especially on high risk areas;

(b) if so, whether Government have conclusively identified the high risk areas so that concerted and vigorous efforts are made there; and

(c) whether the help of NGOs, Panchayats and such grassroot bodies be mobilized to effectively cover such areas, emphasizing on door-to-door methods?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) Government of India conducted nationwide drives of polio immunisation in January and February, 2007. Nationwide rounds (NIDS) will be conducted again in January and February, 2008. Additional polio drives have been conducted during March, April, May, July and August, 2007 in high risk States—Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Delhi and high risk districts of Greater Mumbai, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Haryana and Andhra Pradesh. Additional sub-national polio drives (SNIDs) are planned to be conducted in the high risk areas in September, October, December, 2007 and March, April and May, 2008.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) Yes, Sir. The Government has a strong surveillance system to get information from districts and States regarding polio virus transmission. The India Expert Advisory Group (IEAG) in its meeting held on 29-30th May, 2007 has indicated that Western Uttar Pradesh and Bihar are very high risk for sustaining wild polio virus transmission in second half of 2007.

(c) NGOs and panchayats are being extensively mobilised at the grass root level during the polio immunisation campaigns through the Government machinery and through the community mobilisers of United Nation International Children Emergency Fund (UNICEF), Civil Survival Collaboration and Resources Group (CORE) and Rotary. The Government has deployed Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHA) workers [community workers under National Rural Health Mission (NRHM)] and Anganwadi Workers (AWW) as vaccination team members and mobilizers for the polio campaigns. During each polio campaign, door to door search is made to each and every house in the area where the polio campaign is being conducted to immunise children under the age of 5 years with the help of these NGOs and community level workers.

Female foeticide in Orissa

649. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry is aware of the fact the female foeticide has been rampantly practiced in some of the hospitals in Nayagara, Orissa;

(b) if so, what measures are being taken to prohibit and contain such acts across the country;

(c) whether the State Governments have been sensitized on the issue and the Medical Council have been directed to debar the guilty from the profession;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) and (b) There has been report of female foeticide in the district of Nayagara in the State of Orissa. The State Government of Orissa has constituted a Task Force Committee in each district to enforce the provision of Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques Act (PC&PNDT) and Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) Act. The Government of India is in the process of consideration of carrying out amendments to the PC&PNDT Act to make its implementation more stringent. A National Support and Monitoring Cell (NSMC) which has been formed to intensify the implementation of the Act in the country, has been strengthened with the appointment of a Leader. The State Governments have been provided funds for implementation of the Act under Reproductive and Child Health Programme-II.

(c) to (e) The State Governments have been instructed to take actions as per the PC&PNDT which includes filing up of the Court cases against the violators of the Act and reporting of name to the concerned State Medical Council by the appropriate